

Special Report 46

HUMAN RELATIONS

UPDATE 2000



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

March 2001



HUMAN RELATIONS UPDATE 2000

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FOREWORD

The Army has a history of dealing directly and forcefully with tough organizational issues: a tradition of critical self-examination and improvement. When allegations of trainee abuse surfaced at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland in the fall of 1996, the Army took swift action. In 1997, the Army's Inspector General's office and a Senior Review Panel appointed by then Secretary of the Army, the Honorable Togo West, completed comprehensive assessments of the Army's human relations environment, especially in the training base. Based on the recommendations from these two assessments, the Army developed an Action Plan of over 300 initiatives and actions to improve human relations in the Army.

In subsequent testimony to Congress, Secretary West indicated that the Army would reassess its human relations environment in 12-18 months to make sure the Army was going in the right direction and to provide feedback on the various initiatives and programs as they were being implemented. This concept of reassessment is not unique; it reflects the Army's tradition of evaluate, improve, evaluate. In keeping with this tradition, Secretary West's predecessor, the Honorable Louis Caldera, directed the U.S. Army Research Institute to conduct the reassessment during calendar year 2000. This reassessment, Human Relations Update 2000 (HR 2000), is documented in a two-volume report. The objective of this reassessment was to see if the initiatives and the changes that were made since 1997 have improved human relations in the Army. HR 2000 accomplished this objective through surveys and discussions with some 24,000 soldiers and leaders across the Army. This first look at the actions since 1997 identifies those human relations issues that have improved and those that need additional attention. Armed with this information, the Army can continue to improve the human relations climate through more effective training, programs, and policies. Periodic monitoring of the human relations environment will enable senior Army leaders to remain proactive in solving problems and ensuring a positive working environment for all soldiers and leaders.

We believe the Army has made significant progress in the area of human relations during a time when it has been through enormous change – cuts in personnel, cuts in budgets, and significant increases in deployments. After reading this report, we believe you will appreciate the effects of these changes, what trainees, soldiers, and leaders are experiencing in the year 2000 Army, the progress the Army has made in human relations, and the issues that continue to need improvement.

EDGAR M. JOHNSON
Director

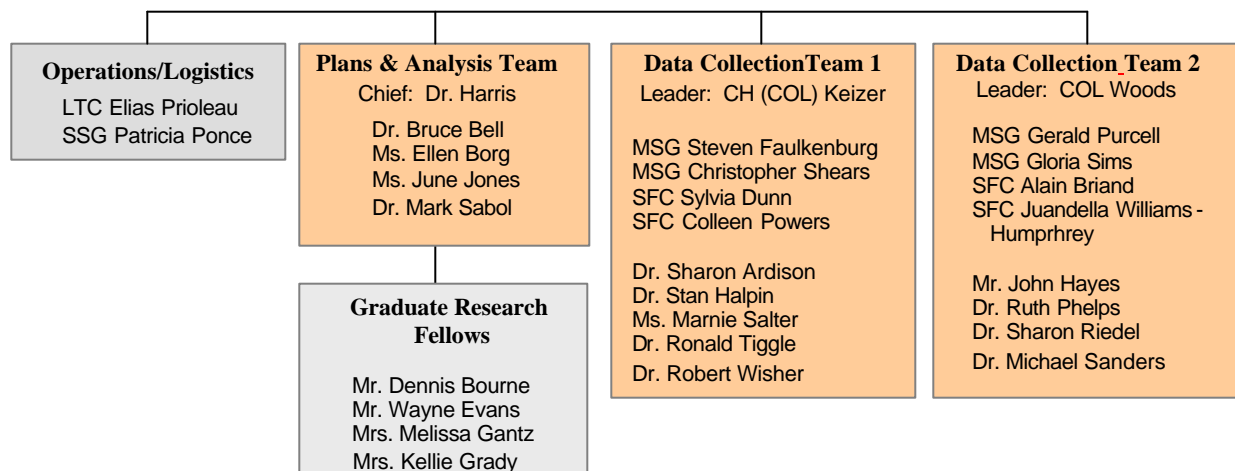
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Human Relations Update 2000 (HR 2000) project could not have been accomplished without the cooperation and support of more than 24,000 soldiers and Army leaders who took the time to complete our surveys and to talk with the members of the HR 2000 Task Force. We wish to thank them for their time and their genuine desire to make the Army a better place to serve and a better organization.

HR 2000 was a complex and difficult project involving a primary Task Force of over 25 military and civilian personnel for various periods of time over the course of a year. These personnel – Department of the Army civilian scientists, commissioned and noncommissioned officers, and graduate research fellows – were specially selected for the project; they are named in the organizational chart below. We would like to thank each of them for their hard work, attention to detail, and willingness to put in extra effort; they were crucial to the successful accomplishment of our mission.



We would also like to thank all the many people who assisted the HR 2000 Task Force over the course of the project, especially Dr. Alma Steinberg, Dr. Morris Peterson, Dr. Pamela Alexander, Dr. Joanne Marshall-Mies, Ms. Francis Kennedy, and Ms. Kathleen Drennan. Their expertise and support made significant contributions to the project.

Finally, we want to thank Mr. John McLaurin, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Manpower and Reserve Affairs and MG (Ret) Thomas Garrett, then Commanding General, Total Army Personnel Command, for their support and counsel. Their guidance and their insights on the human relations issues in the Army were invaluable in planning and executing the HR 2000 project.

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INTRODUCTION

On 14 April 1999, the Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera, with concurrence from then Chief of Staff, General Dennis Reimer, directed the U.S. Army Research Institute (ARI) to plan and conduct an assessment of the human relations environment in the Army and to develop a method to monitor the human relations environment over the long term. This assessment, Human Relations Update 2000 (HR 2000),¹ was a follow-up to the 1997 *Senior Review Panel Report on Sexual Harassment* and Inspector General's *Special Inspection of Initial Entry Training (IET)*. HR 2000 assessed soldier and trainee attitudes, opinions, and experiences related to the overall Army environment and a wide variety of human relations issues and important factors that influence the human relations environment, including the unit environment and leaders and leadership. HR 2000 also included an assessment of four key human relations programs fielded or modified since 1997: the Command Climate Survey, the Army Values Program, the Consideration of Others Program, and Equal Opportunity (EO) Training Programs.

A comprehensive, multi-method approach of soldier surveys, focus group interviews, and individual interviews across different rank groups was used to assess the human relations environment from multiple perspectives. This approach on a 3-year cycle is the recommended strategy for long term tracking of the human relations environment in the Army. An interdisciplinary Task Force of soldiers and civilians organized into 3 teams conducted HR 2000: a planning and analysis team and 2 data collection teams. The data collection teams traveled to 13 stateside locations and 6 overseas locations during the period 1 March through 26 May 2000 to administer surveys and to conduct focus group and individual interviews. The installations were randomly selected to provide a representative sample of operational units covering combat arms, combat support, and combat service support; and IET units covering Basic Combat Training, Advanced Individual Training, and One Station Unit Training.

Sampling was by company-level units and about 14,000 soldiers and 6,000 trainees were surveyed. In addition, 3,680 soldiers and trainees participated in 410 focus groups, and 60 Battalion Commanders and 49 Command Sergeants Major participated in individual interviews.

This Executive Summary provides a summary of the major findings, conclusions, and implications for HR 2000 organized in terms of the chapters found in Volume 1: Initial Entry Training; the Army and unit environment; human relations issues; human relations programs; Army leaders and leadership; and the overall conclusions for the project.

¹ The final report for HR 2000 is contained in two volumes: Volume 1 contains the findings, conclusions, implications, and recommendations for the project. Volume 2 contains Appendices A-G with data tables for each survey question; copies of the surveys; analyses of the focus group and individual interviews and the written comments submitted with the surveys; an analysis of the 1997 SRP Survey vs. the 2000 SRP Survey; and details on the development of the HR 2000 survey.

INITIAL ENTRY TRAINING (IET)

SUMMARY

- ◆ The change in IET is an Army success story. The Army has effectively incorporated human relations training and Army values training into the basic training program and the incidence rates of discrimination and sexual harassment have markedly declined since 1997.
- ◆ Most trainees respect their Drill Sergeants and view them as positive leaders; however, fewer than half of trainees say their Drill Sergeants demonstrate respect and concern for them.
- ◆ Many Drill Sergeants indicate difficulty in dealing with trainee interpersonal issues, and feel micromanaged and overly restricted in implementing good order, discipline, and tough training.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Motivation, Morale, and Experiences

- The three most important reasons why trainees join the Army are “money for college, to serve my country, and financial security for my family.” Most² trainees are proud to be in the Army and are satisfied with their choice to join; about half report high morale.
- The majority of trainees rate the quality of training they are receiving as very good. Overall, their training experience has been easier than they expected; however, adjusting to being away from home, handling the stress, and the restrictions on personal time have been harder than they expected.

Unit Climate

- Most trainees say the climate in their units is positive and that they respect the Drill Sergeants in their units; about half say they could easily talk with their commander and that the Drill Sergeants are available when trainees have a problem. However, fewer than half (40%) of trainees agree that there is open and honest communication in their unit.

² The words used in summary and detailed findings in HR 2000 have the following statistical definitions: Very few=15% or less; few=16% to 33%; some=34% to 49%; many=50% to 65%; majority=66% to 74%; and most=75% or more.

INITIAL ENTRY TRAINING (IET)

Human Relations Climate

- About half of trainees say that peers in their units make negative or hostile comments about homosexuals. About 40% say their peers make negative, hostile, or sexist comments about women, and about one-fifth say their peers make negative, hostile, or racist comments about racial/ethnic minorities. Very few trainees say the Drill Sergeants tolerate these comments.
- Half of male and 39% of female trainees have experienced some type of negative treatment since they joined their training unit, such as personal threats, overly nasty/crude language, threats of violence, or excessive intimidation.

Human Relations Issues

- Fewer trainees now than in 1997 indicate they have experienced discrimination since they joined their training unit – down 18% for males and 24% for females.
- Fewer trainees now than in 1997 indicate they have experienced incidents of sexual harassment since they joined the Army – down 5% for males and 14% for females. Trainees are less likely now than in 1997 to say a Drill Sergeant is the harasser and more likely to say it is another trainee.
- The majority of trainees say that the discrimination or sexual harassment incidents they have experienced since joining the Army have been irritations or annoyances. About one-third of male and one-fourth of female trainees say the incidents have been serious problems.

The Complaint Process

- Most trainees understand the process for reporting discrimination and for reporting sexual harassment, understand the difference between the two, and know how to deal with someone who harasses or discriminates against them. However, few trainees report either incidents of discrimination or of sexual harassment to their chain of command or other military authority.
- Almost half of trainees say that they did not report the incidents of discrimination or sexual harassment because they “took care of it themselves.” However, those who did not take care of it themselves say they did not report the incidents because they did not think anyone would listen to/believe them or they were afraid of what would happen if they did report it.

Impact of Discrimination or Sexual Harassment

- Trainees who experience discrimination or sexual harassment are more likely to report low morale and are less positive about their unit and their Drill Sergeants. They are also more likely to indicate they will leave the Army sooner than they had originally planned and rate the quality of their training lower compared to trainees who have not experienced discrimination or sexual harassment.

INITIAL ENTRY TRAINING (IET)

Army Values Program

- Many trainees indicate that Army Values Training is very effective in teaching values and instilling pride; and that they are receiving about the right amount of values training. Fewer trainees (about 42%) think the values training is very effective in building respect in the unit, improving morality in the Army, or making a difference in how well trainees in the unit work together.

Leaders and Leadership

- Most trainees think the Drill Sergeants in their units really know their stuff, work well together, and set a good example for trainees. However, fewer than half of trainees say Drill Sergeants respect, understand, or listen to them.
- Positive leadership behaviors by Drill Sergeants are significantly related to positive ratings of unit climate and respect and trust, to higher morale, and to higher trainee satisfaction. Positive leadership behaviors are also significantly related to decreased amounts of hostility and discrimination.
- Drill Sergeants' expressed a number of concerns and opinions in the focus group interviews:
 - Their "power" to discipline trainees has been taken away. The "power," they say, now resides with the trainees who can file discrimination/harassment charges if they don't like what the Drill Sergeants or other unit leaders say or do.
 - Drill Sergeants are not well prepared to deal with the interpersonal problems between trainees or to deal effectively with female trainees.
 - The "rules of engagement" related to dealing with females are getting in the way of good order and discipline, making females appear to be "a problem."

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The change in IET is an Army success story. The incidence rates of trainee discrimination and sexual harassment have markedly declined; very few trainees indicate these are problems in 2000. In addition, a much lower number of trainees now than in 1997 say their Drill Sergeants are involved in the incidents. The Army Values Training has been well integrated into the overall IET program, and most trainees are positive about it. The program is effective in teaching and instilling Army values and trainee satisfaction has improved.

Although trainees are generally positive about IET and about their Drill Sergeants, they express conflicting attitudes about their units and their leaders. For example, most trainees respect their Drill Sergeants, but do not believe their Drill Sergeants respect them. Most trainees

INITIAL ENTRY TRAINING (IET)

say their unit climate is positive, but a few do not trust their peers and less than half say there is open and honest communication in their units. About half of trainees say their Drill Sergeants and leaders are easy to talk with, but a few trainees who experienced discrimination or sexual harassment don't think anyone will listen to/believe them or they are afraid to report it to the chain of command. The incidence of sexual harassment is down, but there are hostile, sexist comments being made by some trainees and tolerated by some Drill Sergeants, especially in all-male or predominantly-male units. Most of these conflicting trainee issues center around effective leadership and may indicate that additional changes are required in the selection and preparation of Drill Sergeants. Indeed the strong relationship between positive leadership – demonstrating Army values, setting and enforcing high standards, and showing respect and concern for trainees – and higher morale, better training, higher trust, and retention indicate that improvements in the selection and preparation of Drill Sergeants and unit leaders would have a high payoff.

Many Drill Sergeants also indicate that additional improvements are needed in their selection and in the preparation to accomplish their difficult job. Some believe that they are restricted from using the “old” methods of tough discipline and training and that this undermines their authority and makes a difficult job almost impossible to accomplish. Both trainees and Drill Sergeants indicate a desire for tough discipline and training – for many trainees it is why they joined the Army; for Drill Sergeants it is fundamental to being a soldier. Better tools and techniques to discipline trainees are definitely needed. With the renewed emphasis on Army values, these techniques must balance tough discipline, mutual respect and dignity, and a genuine concern for soldiers with maintaining the Drill Sergeants' authority and allowing them to retain control when they are challenged. Additional preparation of Drill Sergeants to more effectively deal with trainee interpersonal problems and to improve consistency in standards, rules, and discipline would improve the human relations environment and establish a firm foundation of professional behavior for all trainees.

ARMY AND UNIT ENVIRONMENT

SUMMARY

- ◆ Most soldiers are proud to be in the Army, yet they are significantly less positive about their units, and soldier and unit morale are at a 10-year low.
- ◆ Most soldiers think the Army is doing a good job in the area of human relations. They think the most serious unit problems are generally not human relations issues but, rather, too few people, micromanagement, and stress.
- ◆ Many soldiers say senior Army leaders have overemphasized human relations issues – at the expense of mission training and readiness – in response to political and media pressure.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Army Climate

- A majority of soldiers are proud to be in the Army; but few would recommend joining the Army to a friend.
- Almost half of all soldiers are satisfied with their jobs; however, few junior soldiers see a close match between their actual assignments and what they expected to be doing when they got out of basic training. Many indicate that they are not working or being trained in their Military Occupational Specialty (MOS)/branch.

Unit Climate

- Company-level soldier morale (self morale) is lower than it has been in 10 years. Soldiers attribute this to a shortage of people, high stress, low pay and poor living conditions, unpredictable schedules/long hours, lack of discipline and respect, too little family time, and lack of mission or MOS training.
- Almost half of company-level soldiers think their units are well prepared to perform their missions; however, less than one-third of soldiers would feel confident going to war with their current unit.
- Soldiers do not express a high level of trust in the members of their units or in the communication within their units; about one-third report negative behaviors within their units such as lying, cover-up of problems, and shirking of jobs/duties.

ARMY AND UNIT ENVIRONMENT

Unit Problems

- Soldiers indicate that the most serious unit problems are related to too few people to do the work, stress/tension, micromanagement, soldiers trying to avoid work, and favoritism; not to other human relations issues.

Career Intentions

- A higher percentage of soldiers now than in 1998 indicate that they will leave the Army at the end of their current obligation (56% today vs. 39% in 1998).

Grading the Army

- Most soldiers give the Army a good grade on human relations issues such as preventing discrimination and sexual harassment, and providing equal opportunity.
- Many soldiers view senior leaders as overemphasizing human relations issues at the expense of mission training and readiness in reaction to political and media pressure. This is resulting in a negative reaction by some soldiers and leaders to human relations programs and policies.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Soldiers and leaders express a number of contradictions concerning the Army and their experiences in the Army:

- Soldiers are proud to be in the Army, but they wouldn't recommend it to a friend.
- Soldiers are proud to be in the Army, but many have already decided to leave, or are leaving sooner than they originally planned.
- Some soldiers think their units are well prepared to accomplish the mission, but few express confidence in their unit if they had to go to war, and few say they trust their peers.
- Some soldiers are in units that are overworked and experiencing high operational tempo (OPTEMPO) and stress; some are wasting time, unclear about their mission, and stressed because long work hours are keeping them from their families.
- Most soldiers believe the Army is doing a good job on human relations, but one of the top five serious unit problems is favoritism.
- Soldiers and leaders think that human relations issues are very important, but think the current emphasis on human relations is out of balance with the actual problems.

ARMY AND UNIT ENVIRONMENT

- Soldiers and leaders think that human relations issues are very important, but think there is too much emphasis on human relations training at a time when resource shortages and excessive taskings are making it difficult to accomplish their primary missions.

Soldiers and leaders are strongly attached to the “ideal” of the Army as an organization. Even when soldiers talk about leaving, most start the sentence with “I love the Army, but...” This strong attachment to the organization is countered with what the units are experiencing today. The stress created by shortages of personnel and resources, long work hours, low pay, and limited family time have decreased soldiers’ morale and their units’ morale. For leaders, micromanagement and “zero defects” – pressures and threats to their careers for “any mistakes on their watch” – further complicate these factors.

These conflicting views result in some soldiers and leaders expressing a wish to return to “basics”; many say they cannot do a good job of accomplishing their primary mission with fewer resources and increased demands on those resources. What is clear is that soldiers and leaders believe they are stretched very thin and the associated stress and strain is having a negative effect on attitudes, opinions, and experiences with respect to units, leaders, working relationships, and the human relations environment. The human relations environment cannot change independent of the unit and Army environment; they are interrelated. The reaction to the perceived overemphasis on human relations at a time when soldiers, leaders, and units are struggling with what they perceive to be more serious issues, illustrates that change in the Army and unit environment must go hand-in-hand with changes in human relations programs and policies for them to be most effective.

HUMAN RELATIONS ISSUES

SUMMARY

- ◆ Many soldiers consider the Army a fair place to work, and most incidents of sexual harassment are considered irritations rather than serious problems. However, the soldiers who experience either discrimination or sexual harassment show less trust in their units and chain of command, are less prepared to perform their mission, and are more likely to leave the Army.
- ◆ More soldiers, across rank, gender, and race, experience incidents of discrimination than incidents of sexual harassment, and rates of each have remained relatively constant over the last 5 years.
- ◆ The EO complaint system does not appear to be working well from the soldiers' perspective; soldiers understand it, but few use it or are satisfied with the actions taken as a result of their complaints.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Human Relations Environment

- Many soldiers think the Army treats people fairly across race, gender, and ethnicity with respect to assignments, promotions, discipline, and awards. The majority of soldiers think the genders work well together in garrison; many think they work well together in the field.
- Almost half of all soldiers, across rank, race, and gender, indicate experiencing some type of negative treatment, sexual harassment, or discrimination in the last year.
- About half of company-level soldiers indicate that their peers make negative or hostile comments about homosexuals. Some soldiers (about 37%) say their peers make negative, hostile, or sexist comments about women; a few (about 24%) say their peers make negative, hostile, or racist comments about racial or ethnic minorities. Very few soldiers indicate that their unit leaders tolerate these negative comments.
- Some soldiers, both male and female, indicate that the current environment is fairly hostile to females. Some males blame females for the recent overemphasis on “soft” human relations issues and the perceived lowering of standards in the Army; many females see this as making it harder for them to be “a part of the team.”

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Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

- More soldiers experienced incidents of discrimination than experienced incidents of sexual harassment, and the rates of each have remained relatively constant over the last 5 years.
- The percentage of soldiers experiencing discrimination has not changed significantly over the last 5 years ranging from a low in 2000 of 17% to 22% reported in 1998.
- Very few soldiers agree with the statement “there are high levels of racial or ethnic discrimination in this company,” or with the statement “there are high levels of sexual harassment in this company.” And, the percentages agreeing have decreased since 1997.
- Soldiers indicate that a wide variety of issues, other than race, ethnicity, gender, and religion, may result in discrimination or harassment, such as being overweight, single, on a medical profile, or not speaking English well. Some soldiers also indicate that subtle discrimination is taking place with respect to limitations of assignments and training opportunities for female and minority soldiers.
- The percentage of soldiers experiencing sexual harassment has not changed significantly over the last 5 years ranging from 3%-9% for male soldiers and from 22%-25% for female soldiers.

Sexual Harassment Critical Incidents

- For the most critical incidents of sexual harassment, that is the incident that had the greatest effect on them, soldiers indicate that the harasser was usually of the same or higher rank and was a person in their unit. About one-third say the person was in their chain of command.
- Most soldiers say that the incident of sexual harassment that had the greatest effect on them over the last 12 months was an irritation or annoyance; however, about 23% of female and 16% of male soldiers say it was a serious problem.

The Complaint Process

- Most soldiers understand the process for reporting discrimination and sexual harassment, know what kind of words or actions are considered sexual harassment, and understand the difference between the two. However, the majority of soldiers do not report either incidents of discrimination or incidents of sexual harassment to their chain of command or other military authority.
- Male and female soldiers indicate similar reasons for *not* reporting discrimination. A few (21% and 28%, respectively) took care of the incidents themselves; for those who did not take care of it themselves, they thought nothing would be done about it or that it would make their work situation unpleasant.

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- Male and female soldiers also indicate similar reasons for *not* reporting sexual harassment. Some (39% and 46%, respectively) took care of it themselves; for those who did not take care of it themselves, they thought it would make work unpleasant, thought nothing would be done about it, or that it wasn't important.
- Male soldiers indicate generally negative responses from the organization when they reported either discrimination or sexual harassment, including: their complaint was discounted, no action was taken, or they were encouraged to drop the complaint.
- Female soldiers indicate similar and generally negative responses from the organization when they reported discrimination. However, when reporting sexual harassment incidents, many female soldiers indicate positive responses from the organization: the person who bothered them was talked to about the behavior, their complaint was being investigated, their supervisor gave them full support, or the person who bothered them was formally counseled.

Satisfaction with the Complaint Process

- Slightly less than half of female soldiers and one-quarter of male soldiers were satisfied with the actions the organization took in response to their report of a sexual harassment incident; less than one-third were satisfied with the actions the organization took in response to their report of a discrimination incident.

Why the Complaint Process May Not Be Working

- Some soldiers, across race and gender, indicated that reporting incidents of discrimination or sexual harassment to the chain of command or filing a formal complaint often brought negative repercussions. Many soldiers, especially female soldiers, said that it would interfere with their future promotions and their careers, that they would be labeled a troublemaker, and that the label would often follow them when they changed assignments.

Impact of Discrimination or Sexual Harassment Incidents

- Soldiers who experience discrimination or sexual harassment are less satisfied with their jobs, report lower morale, and report less trust in their leaders and their units. They are less likely to say they or their units are well prepared to perform their missions and they are more likely to say they are definitely leaving the Army.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Many soldiers think of the Army as a fair place to work and most incidents of sexual harassment are considered an irritation or annoyance, rather than a serious problem. Rates of sexual harassment and discrimination have remained at about the same level over the last

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5 years; despite increased publicity, rates have not increased. In the case of sexual harassment, that rate is significantly lower than in the private or the public sector. However, some soldiers are making, and a few leaders are tolerating, hostile and negative comments, primarily about homosexuals and about women, particularly in all-male or predominantly-male environments. This sends a conflicting message to soldiers and sets the stage for unprofessional behavior and problems in training and deployment situations, and undermines human relations and working relationships across the Army.

Hostility and other negative treatment, discrimination, or sexual harassment also undermine soldier and unit performance and retention. Yet, soldiers can be, and some are, harassed, harassed, intimidated, or treated negatively for a variety of reasons. The hostility and negative treatment that exist cut across rank, race, gender, MOS, and branch; the people who harass, discriminate, or abuse power can also be of any rank, race, gender, MOS, or branch. Few of these incidents appear to constitute sexual harassment or discrimination as defined in the current EO policies and training; those that do often go unreported because of the negative repercussions and because of the generalized distrust that the system works effectively for all soldiers.

The human relations issues facing the Army go beyond minority soldiers, women in the Army, or young soldiers' attitudes. Human relations issues are about professional behavior in any given situation: teaching it, demonstrating it, and holding people accountable for unprofessional behavior. The issues are about trust, teamwork, effective performance, and maintaining readiness in an increasingly more complex organization with an increasingly more diverse workforce. The Army provides a generally effective human relations environment, better than most civilian organizations. However, with the increased emphasis on Army values, any differential treatment based on gender, race, rank, or favoritism becomes even more noticeable and divisive. The challenge for the Army is to create and maintain an environment of *mutual* respect and dignity across all ranks that obtains the highest level of performance from all soldiers and leaders.

HUMAN RELATIONS PROGRAMS

SUMMARY

- ◆ Human relations programs (Command Climate Survey, Army Values Program, Consideration of Others Program, and EO Training) received a mixed assessment from soldiers and leaders.
- ◆ Human relations issues were seen as very important and each of the four programs was seen as contributing to improved human relations.
- ◆ The success of each of the four programs, however, was limited by misunderstandings; a lack of readily available, updated training materials; and, frequently, a “check-the-block” attitude by leaders.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Command Climate Survey

- Some company-level soldiers had taken a Command Climate Survey. About half of the soldiers who had taken a Command Climate Survey had received feedback on the results; some had seen changes as a result of the survey.
- Most soldiers were positive about the Command Climate Survey as a means for commanders to see “how things are going,” but were concerned that the surveys not become just another “check-the-block” item.

Army Values Program

- Almost all soldiers had received their Army values cards and/or values dog tags. The majority of soldiers thought they would be at least moderately effective in helping to teach the Army values and in providing a useful tool for leaders to teach the values. Fewer thought they would be helpful in building respect in the unit, improving morality in the Army, or making a difference in how well people in the unit work together.
- The Army Values Program was working very well in Initial Entry Training (IET) and was well integrated into the training experience. The Army Values Program was not well integrated into operational units’ work or training; or into counseling, professional development, or command briefings.
- Soldiers at all levels are using the Army values as a yardstick to measure their peers and, more importantly, to measure their unit leaders and leaders at all levels of the Army.

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Consideration of Others Program

- Less than one-third of soldiers had attended Consideration of Others sessions. Those who had said the sessions covered a wide variety of human relations issues. Almost two-thirds of soldiers who had attended a session said their unit leaders also attended.
- Many soldiers who had attended a Consideration of Others session thought it would be at least moderately effective in helping people work together, in creating a healthy work environment, and in building unit cohesion.
- The small group discussion format used in Consideration of Others sessions worked well when it was used; however, this format requires a trained, knowledgeable facilitator to be most effective and few trained facilitators are available.
- Consideration of Others is not well understood as a format for training; it is often done in addition to other mandatory HUMAN RELATIONS training.

Equal Opportunity (EO) Training

- Most soldiers had attended EO or Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) training over the last year. A majority of the training was conducted in large group, lecture formats, not in the Consideration of Others, small group discussion format.
- About one-third of soldiers say that the training is very effective in raising awareness of behaviors that might be sexual harassment and about one-fourth say it is very effective in actually reducing/preventing sexual harassment.
- Some soldiers thought there was too much human relations training and that the training was often redundant. Commanders indicated that there was more interest in how many soldiers attended the human relations training than in whether the training works or is needed.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

All four human relations programs that were assessed received mixed reviews from soldiers and leaders. Almost everyone acknowledged that the human relations programs were very important, and that training was necessary for soldiers to maintain awareness of the issues and to be current on the policies and procedures. When implemented effectively, each of the programs was successful in improving the human relations environment and working relationships among soldiers and between soldiers and leaders. However, the success of each program was limited by misunderstandings about what was mandatory and what could be tailored to the needs of the unit; how and where to obtain up-to-date training support (facilitators, materials, and scenarios); and about how to schedule “small group discussions” when time and resources were extremely tight.

HUMAN RELATIONS PROGRAMS

Leader attitudes and actions regarding the human relations training programs and human relations issues affected program success. When negative, they interfered with program effectiveness, and communicated to soldiers that human relations training was getting in the way of “real” training and was just a “check-the-block” event. When leader attitudes and actions were positive, and leaders integrated human relations training and Army values into the overall soldier and unit training as part of teambuilding and readiness, the programs worked more effectively and were well received by soldiers at all levels.

ARMY LEADERS AND LEADERSHIP

SUMMARY

- ◆ Soldiers have conflicting views of their leaders. Many think their leaders are demonstrating positive leadership behaviors such as setting and enforcing standards; however, few soldiers express trust and confidence in their leaders. Many express concern about the ethical climate in their units and in the Army.
- ◆ Soldiers whose leaders demonstrate positive leadership have higher morale, more trust in the unit, and report a more positive human relations climate.
- ◆ Leaders are being challenged by the current environment of high OPTEMPO, reduced resources, and career pressures; and more soldiers now than in 1997 indicate their leaders are demonstrating negative leadership behaviors.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Overall Quality

- About half of company-level soldiers are impressed with the quality of their unit NCOs; just over one-third are impressed with the quality of their unit officers. Some soldiers expressed concern that junior enlisted soldiers are being promoted before they are ready and before they have the skills and development they need to be leaders; they think the emphasis has shifted to quantity over quality for both junior NCOs and junior officers.

Positive Leadership

- The percentage of soldiers who indicate their leaders demonstrate positive leadership is about the same in 2000 as in 1997. For example, many soldiers think their unit leaders set and enforce high standards; from 40% to 52% think they set good examples by behaving the way they expect soldiers to behave.
- About half of soldiers think their unit leaders work well together, respect one another, and show respect and concern for them.

Negative Leadership

- The percentage of soldiers who indicate their leaders demonstrate self-centered leadership is greater in 2000 than in 1997. About one-third of soldiers think their unit leaders are “more interested in looking good than in being good, are more interested in furthering their careers

ARMY LEADERS AND LEADERSHIP

than in the well being of their soldiers, and push soldiers very hard to get things done without regard for the soldiers' needs."

Trust

- Few soldiers agree that there is open and honest communication within their unit or up the chain of command; less than half say they trust the leaders in their chain of command. Female and minority soldiers, and soldiers in Combat Service Support units are more negative on questions evaluating their leaders, their units, honest communication, and trust in their chain of command.
- About half of soldiers indicate that unethical behavior is a moderate or major problem in the Army and only about one-third agree they trust senior Army leaders to make the best decisions to maintain a quality Army.

Setting a Positive Climate

- Many soldiers think their leaders are effective in enforcing the policies against sexual harassment and that they do not tolerate it. About half of all soldiers think leaders believe in the principles of equal opportunity and know how to effectively deal with discrimination. Minority soldiers are more negative than White male soldiers on questions related to leaders' enforcing policies on or effectively dealing with discrimination and sexual harassment.
- Positive leadership behaviors are significantly related to more positive ratings of unit respect, unit trust and cohesion, unit command climate, morale, and job satisfaction. Positive leadership behaviors are also significantly related to decreased amounts of hostility, sexual harassment, and discrimination.
- Few leaders see a connection between human relations and readiness, and many leaders view human relations programs and policies as training distractors. Many leaders think that the excessive demands for human relations training are interfering with their mission training and some think there is more emphasis in the Quarterly Training Brief on the number of soldiers who have missed HR training than on the number who are not weapons qualified.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Comments from soldiers and from leaders at all levels indicate that the stress and pressures of reduced resources are stretching even the excellent leaders. Many soldiers commented that the best leaders, who are willing to lead by example, support soldiers, and "tell it like it is," are not always getting the support from senior leadership. Four findings in particular illustrate the challenges the Army and leaders face in implementing the basic principles of respect and dignity. The increased number of soldiers reporting negative leadership, the concerns over the ethical climate, the expressions of negative attitudes by leaders

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about the amount of human relations training, and the lack of connection that many leaders make between human relations issues and readiness. These findings also suggest why many soldiers have conflicting views of their leaders and why there often appears to be little trust in leaders, in units, or in the chain of command.

The diversity of human relations issues, combined with the stress, high OPTEMPO, and career pressures in the current environment present significant challenges to all leaders. They present very difficult challenges to those leaders who continue to see human relations as “female” issues or as “minority” issues, and not as teamwork or performance issues; to leaders who see human relations issues and training as distractors to “real soldiering.” Maintaining these viewpoints and tolerating or promoting them in others undermines human relations policies and programs and conflicts with Army values at a time when the Army is reestablishing itself as a “values-based” organization. These viewpoints and negative leadership behaviors create barriers to the basic elements necessary for high performance and readiness – teamwork, mutual trust, esprit de corps, and pride in the unit.

CONCLUSIONS

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

- ❖ The improvement in human relations in Initial Entry Training is an Army success story. There have been significant improvements in the working relationships between trainees and Drill Sergeants; most trainees have confidence in their Drill Sergeants and are proud to be in the Army.
- ❖ Overall, the Army as an institution provides a generally effective human relations environment, and human relations issues are not the most serious concerns of soldiers and leaders.
- ❖ Leadership is the key to a positive human relations climate; however, leaders are being challenged in the current environment of high OPTEMPO and reduced resources. Many leaders have not gained the trust and confidence of their soldiers, do not understand the relationship between leadership and human relations, and do not see a clear relationship between human relations and readiness.
- ❖ Many soldiers and leaders do not view human relations as a combat multiplier, but as a distractor to readiness and to the “warrior ethic.” Human relations programs and policies have not been effectively integrated into the warfighting doctrine of the Army.

HR 2000 assessed the status of human relations in the Army from the perspective of the soldiers and leaders who are living and working in units across the Army. Compared to the 1997 Senior Review Panel, we found that some aspects have improved, some have remained about the same, and some have taken a negative slide. Our four conclusions above, and the summaries provided in this Executive Summary, indicate both the significant progress the Army has made, and the areas that need further improvement.

A consistent finding in HR 2000 was how important it was for soldiers to be “soldiers.” Most wanted to do a good job, and to be recognized and respected for their service and contribution to the mission. The “warrior ethic” was important across gender, race, background, MOS, etc., because the Army was important. An effective human relations environment is fundamental to that ethic. Dignity and respect are cornerstones to teamwork and unit cohesion, to individual and unit performance, and to retention and readiness.

Human Relations Update 2000 and the two-volume report that covers the findings, conclusions, and implications are the voice of soldiers and leaders working and living in the Army in the year 2000. Over 24,000 shared their views, their pride, their frustrations, their experiences, and their genuine concerns with us. They also provided specific recommendations and suggestions to improve the human relations environment for us to pass on to senior Army leaders that follow.

CONCLUSIONS

Other Concerns Raised by Soldiers in the HR2000 Survey Comments and Interviews

◆ *Increased injuries related to PT and unit runs*

Many soldiers were reporting injuries related to the amount of running that they were required to do for both PT and unit runs. They questioned whether 5-mile runs 5-days-a-week were really needed to be physically fit. It appeared to them that it was breaking down soldiers. Some soldiers questioned the PT requirements, in general, as not necessarily the best way to stay physically fit. There was also mention of boredom related to doing the same things all the time. Some SGTs mentioned bringing in aerobic tapes and different sports, etc., that had been well received by the troops, seemed to raise morale, and improved fitness.

◆ *Child care issues: hours available, “sick child” care, access/waiting lists*

Daycare is expensive, the hours do not match duty schedules, work schedules are often unpredictable, and daycare will not keep sick children. Males and females are treated differently when family issues come up creating yet another barrier to effective working relationships – females are treated negatively as if they are just trying to get out of work or letting the unit down; males are treated more positively as a caring father or a real family man.

◆ *Amount and availability of alcohol/drugs in the military environment*

Some soldiers commented on the amount and easy availability of alcohol and drugs in the environment and that this seemed to exacerbate tensions or hostilities. It also played a part in sexual relationships that sometimes got out of hand, in sexual harassment, and in general behavioral problems in the unit.

◆ *New fraternization policy misunderstood and difficult to monitor and enforce*

Soldiers could not understand why the fraternization policy was changed, and they saw this change as a negative one. Some were angry because they saw the new policy as “too much interference in their personal lives,” as interfering with unit activities and interpersonal relationships that were crucial for unit cohesion, and as “impossible” to monitor and enforce. The new policy is even more difficult to monitor and enforce with the elimination of the rank structure and designation in the “Army clubs” and the living situations for single soldiers. Many soldiers felt that this policy change was just another demonstration that senior leaders did not know, or care, about the Army or about soldiers.

CONCLUSIONS

Soldier and Leader Concerns (continued)

- ◆ *Apparent focus on recruiting new soldiers; not retaining high quality, experienced soldiers*

Many mid- and senior-level leaders commented that the Army did not value their experience or their loyalty to the organization. They felt that many high-quality leaders were leaving the Army because they had been worn out since the downsizing was “completed” in about 1995 and they felt unappreciated. Some felt the Army was not going in the direction they thought would keep it a strong, warrior-based organization. They felt the Army was overly focused on paying bonuses for unproven recruits, rather than providing higher wages for already proven soldiers and leaders, or providing bonuses or benefits as incentives for high quality soldiers and leaders to remain in the Army.

- ◆ *Some soldiers and units experiencing extreme OPTEMPO, high stress, wearing out; others have little to do, with unclear missions.*

Soldiers and leaders commented that there were at least “two Armies.” One was experiencing extreme stress, long hours, multiple deployments, little family time and fatigue. These soldiers and leaders were being stretched very thin because of the reduction in people and resources; some felt they would have to leave the Army because they didn’t see an ending in sight and they and their families couldn’t take it anymore.

For the “other” Army, soldiers were experiencing boredom, daily work that was unrelated to their MOS or mission, leaders who did not seem to be interested or were uncertain about training or development, long hours, little family time, and stress and frustration because the day-to-day activities and job requirements were not “meaningful” or mission-related. These soldiers were disappointed and angry and, with the additional issues of very low pay, fewer benefits than they expected, and being treated like [expletive], wanted out at the very first opportunity.

CONCLUSIONS

Soldier and Leader Recommendations to Improve the Army Human Relations Environment – and the Army

- ★ Put all the HR training under the “Values Umbrella” and call it a “soldier” name. The current terminology is too soft and touchy, feely. If people are respecting each other, demonstrating integrity, and behaving with honor, then sexual harassment and discrimination don’t happen.
- ★ Implement a train-the-trainer program to develop and certify facilitators for the HR training programs.
- ★ Do a better job in the schoolhouse of teaching officer/NCO roles and responsibilities and the value of each to the unit and Army. Build in mutual respect for these “lanes.”
- ★ Do a better job in the schoolhouse of teaching leaders more effective methods to discipline and deal with “people problems.” The Army needs better techniques to gain respect and build unit cohesion; the message over the last several years is that the techniques we’ve used are not acceptable.
- ★ Put more emphasis on leadership and on respect and concern for soldiers as a key to maximizing soldier potential and unit readiness. Make promotions more dependent on success with soldiers and effective teambuilding.
- ★ Focus on quality, not quantity; make it easier to discharge a substandard soldier or leader. Improve the methods to teach soldiers responsibility and professional behavior. Enforce the rules uniformly across all ranks.
- ★ **Don’t just do more surveys and Task Forces, Listen to Soldiers!!**

CONCLUSIONS

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